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of the men is inherited by their sons. As in the Nupe economic system the women frequently enjoy a financially more advantageous position than the men we find also that, in the event of economic stress, a mother may take over some of the financial duties normally discharged by the father.

Generally speaking, matrilineal descent in Nupe, including here both descent from the mother as an individual and from her family, has essentially the significance of an ultimate safeguard in case the patrilineal arrangement proves insufficient. In Bida society, with its great inequality of wealth and status, rich or powerful maternal relations may be as valuable as paternal relations; political connexions, especially, through the mother's family will often be utilized profitably. We realize that these 'matrilineal' rights do not follow rigid rules of descent and succession; rather they represent a 'second line of defence' on which individuals can fall back in case the 'first line of defence'—claims derived through the father—has failed. If we speak of the Nupe extended family as 'patrilineal' it will be understood that we refer only to the preponderance and the more rigid formulation of rights and duties transmitted in the father's line. The kinship organization as such, in which the alternative methods of reckoning descent stand in that relation of 'first' and 'second line of defence', can be most aptly described by a term which was suggested by R. W. Firth as 'ambilateral'.

The rule of succession to the rights and duties derived in the paternal line, which, as we have seen, imply a succession running through one whole generation before descending to the next, is expressed very clearly in the Nupe kinship terminology, about which I will only say a few words. It is of the classificatory type and corresponds to the generation pattern: it subsumes all members of the kinship group who are of the same generation under a common term. Thus members of the same generation are all 'brothers' to each other, 'sons' to the generation above them, 'fathers' to the generation below, 'grandsons' to the second generation above, and so forth. Within the generation seniority is specially defined: elder brothers are distinguished from younger brothers, and also the father's elder brothers from the father's younger brothers. The former, who represent the potential family heads senior to one's own (real) father, are called 'father', the latter, who may be placed as junior relations under one's father, 'little father'.

Let me summarize the main kinship concepts with which we shall be concerned in the course of this book. We shall largely disregard the fluid and vaguely defined large kinship unit formed by all individuals who are regarded as being *dengi*. When speaking of kinship group, or large family group, we shall always mean the 'house-group'. To the smallest unit, finally, we shall refer either as the family section, or as the household or labour unit, according to the aspect under which we are considering it. I must add, however, that the Nupe also recognize a much wider unit derived—in a very vague sense—from kinship factors. Thus a whole village is sometimes spoken of as representing one *dengi*, and as having 'one ancestor'. This interpretation does not refer to concrete common descent from an original family, but rather reinterprets

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the existing political structure of the community in a kinship sense. The ancestors of the chief who are regarded as founders of the village are also thought of vaguely as ancestors of the whole community. These essentially mythical kinship links exercise no influence upon concrete kinship claims and obligations.

Political factors are also responsible for the development of the large units which characterize kinship among the ruling family. We shall see that the ruling house of Nupe crystallized in three dynasties, which trace their descent from different sons of the founder of the ruling house, and divide between them the rights and duties vested in the ruling house. The ancestors of the three dynasties lived only two or three generations back; but already certain religious observances (prayers on their grave) mark them off from all subsequent royal ancestors. In this rigidly defined system of reckoning descent in the father's line back to these almost sanctified 'first ancestors', and in the relationship with one another which is in the nature of mutual obligations for the sake of the larger unit, the royal house itself, the three dynasties correspond from kinship point of view to incipient *clans*—the only analogy to clan structure which we find in Nupe.

Let me say in conclusion that kinship structure in Nupe is not that dominant, all-enveloping structure which we know from many primitive societies. Although it bears upon religious life, education, and the organization of production, it is greatly overshadowed as a determinant of social behaviour by the factors of political organization and, in economic life, by economic interests proper. Indeed only because of its lesser significance in social life could we omit the detailed description of Nupe kinship from the sociological analysis with which this book is concerned.

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political structure with the additional weight of alien rulership, the state did not break down but on the contrary appeared to have taken out a new lease of life.

Now we shall be able to prove the existence of strong trends of integration which form within the political unit, incidental to it or fostered by it, and which, bridging over cultural diversity and the rift of social and economic inequality, endorse in their fashion the unit wrought by political control. However, in our search for these 'binding forces' of more subtle and conciliatory type we shall discover that they do not all point the same way. They are indeed 'binding' forces—but what they tend to bind and draw together is not invariably the same group substratum.

We must examine first a significant negative instance—kinship. Kinship has no part in this integrative scheme, either ideologically or factually. No attempt is made to invest the conception of the state with that fiction of genealogical or kinship unity which is linked with the concepts of the sub-tribe and the village community. With the increased freedom of movement which is one of the results of political unification kinship relations become more widely scattered and marriage between distant localities is increasing and is regarded more and more as normal; but these new kinship relations draw only a patchy, irregular pattern that can have little influence upon the integration of the people at large. Moreover, kinship relations are often subordinated to political interests; patronage and the adherence to political factions may even break up family units. The widest gulf, between rulers and subjects, and between the *élite* culture of Bida and the peasant sections, is bridged only by the sociologically less significant form of intermarriage between men of the upper and women of the lower classes. We shall see later that full intermarriage is rigidly restricted and rendered specially difficult, unless it follows already existing political ties of patronage. We shall, in fact, have to speak of a definite class endogamy among the ruling classes. Marriage and kinship ties thus cement the solidarity of the component groups of the state, not of the state itself.

We continue our search in the economic field. Political unification carries in its wake expansion of economic co-operation and interdependence. Economic areas were re-designed in accordance with the new, wider political unit and its centre of gravity, the populous capital, which depends for food and supplies on the agricultural districts. But the contribution of this widened economic co-operation to national solidarity is negligible if not wholly negative. In this reorientation of economic links the boundaries of the state have frequently been crossed and disregarded: trade became 'international'; craftsmen, traders, and even peasants are always ready to seek profitable new markets outside Nupe, and even to emigrate for the sake of better business prospects. Economic interdependence and co-operation even introduce new conflicts and forms of antagonism which set group sections against each other. We shall speak of the village artisans who openly admit (and partly resent) the competition of the superior Bida crafts. In times of crisis conflicts of this kind tend to become more strongly marked. During the depression of 1934–5 I could notice distinct resentment on the part of the peasants

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which, in the interest of efficiency, has evolved centralized control of labour and means of production on a comparatively large scale, comes closer than any other Nupe craft to the principle of the modern factory system.

We have already seen that in the group at large, i.e. in the glass-workers' guild, a similar intensive co-operation obtains. Its organization falls to the guild-head, who assigns the different tasks to the various workshops and is responsible for the general planning of production. This planning must take into account the varying conditions of the market, and we find, in fact, that the guild-head, without interfering with the commercial transactions of the individual workshop, regularly consults traders and middlemen who visit the *masagá* quarter, and maps out accordingly the scheme of work for his community. On my many visits to the *masagá* I found that the guild-head could always tell me what kind of work was carried out in the various workshops, or when a particular workshop would start on a new task. The guild-head, who styles himself *Masagá*, has his own workshop, where his sons and brothers are working. He does not often work there himself, but certain difficult tasks, such as the making of very big, heavy bangles, which fetch the highest price, he alone can perform. The guild-head assists his co-workers with advice and practical help, also with small loans of money for the purchase of raw material or fuel; he arbitrates in internal quarrels, and he is, like all Nupe guild-heads, the accredited representative of his guild at the Nupe court.

The ever-expanding business of the Bida glass industry involves an almost permanent need of new labour. Formerly the glass-workers bought slaves and trained them in the craft in order to enlarge their machinery of production. To-day they are regularly accepting apprentices. In 1936 five young men were being trained as glass-workers. An apprentice applies to the guild-head, who will then place him in charge of a certain workshop. The training is calculated to take three years, during which time the apprentices continue to live in their own homes and come to the *masagá* quarter only to work. But when their apprenticeship is completed they not only move into the *masagá* quarter, but are expected to marry *masagá* women (as did also the slaves in former days). This adoption into the kinship group is considered essential and is as much a qualification for the practice of the craft as is the technical training itself. Thus the monopoly of the glass-workers is kept intact, and no new branches can be established outside their organization. Kinship interests and kinship co-operation are enlisted in the service of professional co-operation and solidarity and in maintaining the continuity of a highly specialized, monopolized and almost secret, technique of production. Economic interests, in turn, are seen to be sufficiently powerful to effect a radical adjustment in the kinship structure, and to create, in a patrilineal society, a matrilineal enclave.

WEAVERS

The weavers, called *edeluciži*, present another instance of the tripartite organization of Bida crafts. Each of the three *ekpā* of the town harbours one of the three guild sections of the weavers. However,

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456 182 production, the present case demonstrates forcibly that it affects the very stability of the economic system of the country. We cannot claim to be able to describe exactly how the labour-unit was working under traditional conditions, and to state categorically that the scheme of insurance entailed in it operated without difficulty or friction. But on the evidence which we possess it is reasonable to assume that under certain conditions, with a smaller taxation, and protected from severe, incalculable, market fluctuations, the large co-operative group represented—or would represent—an eminently stable and successful labour-unit. The process of transformation cannot be halted. Where the large labour-unit still exists, it may, given the conditions just mentioned, be preserved; where it has disappeared, it cannot be revived. Our conclusions point to one solution only: to the creation of new institutions and labour organizations which can be made to fulfil, under existing conditions, those tasks which fell formerly to the labour organization that has disappeared—above all, the task of insurance. Such institutions can be found in co-operative organization, saving societies, co-operative marketing, and suchlike—organizations which in other parts of Africa have amply proved their efficiency.[1]

ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND THE GROUP

602 Throughout this discussion we have dealt with family and kinship group purely in their economic aspect. We have interpreted the mechanisms which maintain the working-unit and thus the co-operation in its human substratum, the family group, in terms of economic relations only. Against this treatment of the problem one might argue that it sees only one side of it, and that the kinship and family structure must be taken into account also as an entity *sui generis*, which, within the framework of economic relations, exercises its own specific influences. One might argue, in particular, that as the Nupe *efakó*-unit is based on the family, kinship ties and kinship sentiments as such supply the binding forces of the labour group—'maintain labour', in our terminology—and that the binding forces which we have recognized, namely, commonness of material interests and benefits accruing from co-operation, are in reality mutual kinship obligations.

The double nature of economic obligations in a productive unit which happens to be a kinship-unit at the same time cannot be denied. The influence of kinship factors can, in fact, be made evident by comparing the labour-unit based on kinship, with similar labour-units in which kinship plays no part. While, in the former, co-operation is achieved by mutual obligations such as payment of bride-price, and supply of clothing, food, and shelter, labour of the latter order must be recompensed in the form of money wages. The effectiveness of kinship

[1] It has been said that our intention should always be to graft these new co-operative organizations on to existing, indigenous, organizations. The scope and the possibilities of such a scheme must not be exaggerated. Although the tasks with which the new organization is to be charged may have formed part of the traditional system, the organization itself may have to be newly created, and may, in fact (as in our case), have to replace a failing indigenous organization, rendered inadequate by modern conditions.

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sentiments in co-operation was also implied in various statements made earlier in the discussion of economics. We have seen that the craft-guilds plan their labour organization on kinship lines, and reinforce the labour group by what we have called 'professional endogamy'. But let us realize that in doing this they do not appeal to abstract kinship ties or 'bonds of blood', but merely duplicate the common labour interests by corresponding family interests, namely, the concrete interests and forms of social interdependence entailed in intermarriage. Another instance of the influence of kinship ties became apparent in the fact that to-day sons would still agree to stay in the *efakó*, while brother's sons decline to do so. Yet we have also seen that even sons desire under certain conditions to be released from the *efakó*-unit. In the case of individual crafts and trade, kinship obligations, even of sons to fathers, are no longer recognized. The dissolution of the large labour-unit, moreover, has made it abundantly clear that its size and coherence is determined predominantly by economic interests and relations. Kinship bonds and sentiments are not strong enough to maintain a labour group once its economic usefulness is impaired. Generally speaking, then, kinship bonds, in order to supply a substratum for productive co-operation, must have the support of economic incentives—material benefits and forms of compensation. Where the latter fail, the kinship bonds themselves will fail in this task.

Though we cannot thus admit the effectiveness of kinship factors as such (at least not in a decisive measure) upon the labour organization, the reverse is no doubt true. The labour organization exercises a two-fold influence upon the structure of the family and kinship group: (1) through contributing to the co-operative mechanisms within the kinship group, and (2) through accepting the responsibility for certain tasks which are vital to the continuity and stability of the kinship group.

(1) The integration of the kinship group, that is, the 'internal adaptation' of the social unit (Radcliffe-Brown), is largely determined by the scope and closeness of contacts and forms of co-operation existing in the group. Co-operation in the same labour-unit thus represents one of the most important integrative factors in this sense. We remember also that the labour-unit coincides with the household-unit, and that the individuals who agree to work together also 'keep house', eat, and live together. The constant contacts and the lasting mutual adjustment entailed in this productive arrangement build up strongly coherent units. The reduction in size, and the splitting-up into small individual units, of the large labour-unit, must detract essentially from the integration of the family group.

(2) Speaking generally, the large labour group, led by old and experienced men, is more far-sighted in its economic planning than the small one-man or two-men unit. It allows for certain group interests which the individual worker will ignore, or discount as of lesser importance; it can assess necessities and wants more objectively, with a view to the fundamental needs of the group rather than immediate individual satisfaction. Thus the family head will place foremost the necessity of finding the bride-price for the junior family members in order to

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602 592 182 establish them socially as full members of the community, i.e. as married men, and, indirectly, to assure the continuity of the family group. We have seen that even if the family head is unable to produce the necessary amount himself, and the young men have themselves to contribute, the family head would keep and save the money for them. The young men, left to themselves, are tempted to squander money on things which appear to them to be of greater urgency, and to disregard, to their own detriment as well as to the detriment of the group, the more distant necessity of marriage. As in the case of the Bida labourers, their money 'goes at once', and they remain unmarried even a considerable time after having reached marriageable age. In the extreme case a family head would even pawn the labour and liberty of a younger family member who is less essential to the group for the sake of keeping in freedom the elder, more important family member, or enabling him to found a family. We can go even farther than this. Older men, tending to uphold tradition, will plan labour and expenditure so that there should be money, food, as well as time available for family feasts or communal religious ceremonies. Their efforts thus serve (unconsciously) the interests of group integration at large, which the younger generation, not so fully steeped in traditional ways of thinking, may hesitate to put before more immediate attractions. Finally, by submitting to the authority of the older men in productive co-operation, the labour-unit also sustains their position of authority in a wider sense, as leaders of the community. We can say, then, that the large labour-unit is committed to the maintenance of the structure and the traditional values of the society, and that with its dissolution an important agency of social integration and continuity disappears.

796 602 182 The changes which the *gunnu* ritual has undergone recently are a convincing instance of this kind. In its traditional form the *gunnu* contained a certain most stirring scene which took place on the eve of the ritual, and which concerned the young men of the village especially. They were herded together in a certain place in the uninhabited bush, where they had to spend the night; they were to wait for a terrifying apparition, the spirit of the *ndakó gboyá*, who would question them about their moral conduct in the preceding year. If they were found guilty of having behaved disrespectfully towards their elders, they were flogged by their comrades at the command of the spirit. I have quoted already the article in which I described in detail the ritual and its effectiveness as a mechanism of social integration in the family group as well as the community.[1] But even from this short description we can gather the psychological importance of a ritual which uses such impressive stimuli to press home moral teaching, and to bind together periodically, in a common experience, the growing generation. Now, although the *gunnu* is still performed, the 'bush night' has been abandoned in many villages, and the explanation given was everywhere that the young men had refused to be subjected to the ordeal of this inquisition and punishment. The young men themselves were outspoken about the reasons of their refusal: 'We are now working as independently as the old men, we are paying tax for ourselves—why should we be flogged and threatened as if

[1] See pp. 25, 63.

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we were small boys?' In their own words they confirm my argument that the weakening of productive co-operation entails a weakening also of other forms and bonds of group unity.

We may for the moment reflect on the fact that this progressive weakening of group integration occurs in a society with decreasing population. Partly this development underlines the strength and urgency of the forces which are working for the dissolution of the large labour-unit, and which here foster the tendency to split and reduce in size a working-unit which is already, as it were, automatically declining. But it also reveals the significant fact that a loosening integration and progressive subdivision of units is not invariably correlated with an increase in the size of groups, and the inherent difficulty of maintaining cohesion.[1]

The present discussion has transcended the domain of economics. Where previously we have attempted to demonstrate the effects of changes in the structure of the labour-unit within the range of economic relations, i.e. on productive organization and the stability of the economic system, we are now studying the significance of these changes for the organization and stability of the social group. We can trace the influence of the changing economic organization upon social structure through wider and wider circles. Take the institution of the Nupe market. We have seen that the peasant attendance of the local village markets coincides with a local group characterized by regular social contacts, intermarriage and 'common living' in general. The market meeting mobilizes the local community, adds to the common interests, and forms an important focus for these contacts and forms of intercourse. Like the labour-unit on a smaller scale, it contributes essentially to social integration. This is no longer true of professional trade, which is carried on across community boundaries, and remains independent of established group-ties. Like the modern labour-unit, professional trade accepts solely the dictate of the impersonal profit motive.

Expanding trade connexions of this kind are only possible in a social system which provides safety and protection outside the narrow boundaries of the local community. They depend, in other words, on the large-scale political organization of the state. Like the economic relations which take place within its confines, the integrative mechanism of the state is essentially impersonal, and based on abstract principles rather than forms of co-adaptation growing from 'common living'. The transformation in the group substratum of economic relations is thus determined by the same concepts which also determine the transformation of the largest group unit, from community to state. Technically, the expansion of trade and commerce, production and exchange, would have been impossible without the corresponding expansion of political control. It would, perhaps, be going too far to say that spiritually also the former would have been impossible without the latter—without the conceptual framework which the latter provided. But we are justified in saying that the two forms of expansion reflect, materially as well as spiritually, two aspects of the same social process.

[1] This latter view was expressed, in the form of a 'social law', by Professor Radcliffe-Brown.

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limited to acts of violence committed unwittingly, in the course of the torch throwing and playful fighting. The torch processions invariably led to serious organized fights between the three *ena* groups from the three divisions of the town. On their way back from the river one *ena* would ambush another, and try to invade its 'territory'. A fierce fight would ensue, lasting the whole night, fought with torches, sticks, stones, and even formerly (as my older informants maintained) with swords and guns. Serious wounds and loss of eyesight were a common feature of these 'battles of youth', which were fought with all the violence of heated party feuds. For party feuds they were—inspired by the political rivalry that is embodied in the threefold dynastic division of the kingdom. Let us reflect that the *navũ* provides the only occasion at which all the scattered age-grade groups of Bida are united in common action. The unity which they achieve is typical of Bida society—a unity based on partisanship and political factions. The acts of violence committed in the *navũ* fights led the Administration to intervene, and the fights were forbidden under *Etsu* Bello. Yet the memory is still vividly alive. Younger and older men who have once participated in a fight still proudly recount their feats which helped their side to win. But even young boys, novices at the *navũ*, are aware of the traditional significance of the ceremony. At the *navũ* of 1936 schoolboys from the Middle School had been encouraged by their teachers to send, for the first time, an official contingent to the *navũ* procession and to take their place among the age-grade groups. The boys did not anticipate a 'proper' *navũ*; for, as they explained to the director of the school, if they were to behave according to traditional standards, 'the *yan doka* (police) would get nasty'.

Certain important activities and obligations embodied in the age-grade association outlive the lifetime of the *ena* and accompany the individual through his whole adult life. The celebration of kinship events with the co-operation of age-grade associations is a first instance. All members of an *ena* are required to appear at the kinship feasts celebrated in the house of one of the *ena* members, and this duty applies both to comrades and ex-comrades. When a man celebrates the naming ceremony of a new-born child, or the wedding of himself or a close relative, or when he buries his father or elder brother, he will expect all his old comrades to come, to bring their congratulations or condolences, and to join the family guests. The Nupe greatly appreciate kinship festivities on an imposing scale, with a large—and generous—attendance. Age-grade loyalty is thus enlisted to make the festivities a success and to add to the prestige of the host. The readiness of the ex-members of an *ena* to fulfil these social obligations towards an old comrade depends, however, on the rank which he had held in the *ena*, and on the popularity which he enjoyed among his fellow members. If the age-grade association is thus designed to contribute to the social prestige of its ex-members in adult life, this dependence on the goodwill of one's comrades must, in anticipation, act as an important controlling influence upon behaviour in the age-grade association itself.

There exists also a certain clearly formulated code of conduct which

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loyalties which govern the town hold their sway over youth as well as adults; and on the occasion of the *navũ* the factional jealousies, never fully submerged, were allowed to come into the open. Thus the torch processions invariably led to organized and heated fights between the three groups; on the way back from the river, especially, one would ambush the other or try to invade the rival territory. The battle is said to have lasted the whole night, being fought with torches, sticks, stones, and any handy weapons. Injuries (some say, even death) inflicted in the course of the *navũ* went unpunished; for on this one night the law of the land was suspended. Eventually, in 1920 or thereabouts, the excesses of this all-too realistic play forced the Government to intervene and to forbid this phase of the *navũ*.

In spite of its realism, however, the mock battle not only legitimized factional hostility but also diverted it into relatively harmless channels. For though the boys and youths would give vent to sentiments commonly felt, they themselves were still outside serious politics and not yet genuinely caught up in factional strife. They would still be play-acting, however realistically, much as their whole age-grade life, with its imitation of adult ranks and ambitions, is play-acting and a make-believe copy of 'real life'. For the population of the city, whose sons and brothers took part in the 'battle of youth', this was in the nature of a vicarious and controlled catharsis of tensions grown over the year; for the young fighters, it was the climax of age-grade life and a seal set to this 'education for citizenship'. Needless to say, the practice is still vividly remembered. And it is not only the older people who talk nostalgically about their more exciting youth; the young people today have preserved at least the idea of the thing. Small boys with whom I talked before the *navũ* explained to me with great glee all that they and their age mates were going to do to their 'enemies'. In the end, of course, they did nothing; so that today the 'battle of youth' has moved a further stage towards mere make-believe.[1]

The licensed aggression of the torch festival reappears on the next day in a new context, that of kinship. For the *navũ* is also an occasion for *ma dzo*, for 'joking', that is, for the licensed liberties commonly referred to as 'joking relationship'. Though much less formalized than in other African societies, the institution of joking relationship plays a clearly defined part in Nupe social life. The individuals standing in this relationship are called *dzomanci*, 'playmates', the relationship itself being derived mainly from kinship position. Thus the joking relationship obtains between grandparents and grandchildren of the opposite sex; between cross

[1] See also *A Black Byzantium*, pp. 396–7.

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cousins; between a man and his elder brothers' wives; between a man and his mother's brother's wives; between a man and his wife's *dzomanci*; and between a woman and her father-in-law and her mother-in-law's sister's sons. The relevance of this arrangement for Nupe kinship organization does not concern us here; nor need we consider the joking relationship as it affects everyday life. Let me only stress that the active partners in this relationship, that is, the individuals entitled to take the liberties, are always young people; older persons cease to engage in the joking relationship or become engaged in it only as passive partners, as the victims exposed to the liberties. In practice, then, the joking relationship is asymmetrical, amounting to liberties taken by children or youths with their elders and, in the majority of cases, by one sex with the other.[1] The liberties themselves take this form. Whenever an 'active' partner in the relationship meets his playmate he would lightly beat him or her with a stick until the victim appeases the assailant with a small gift of money. Or boys and young men would visit the home of a playmate, tie his (her) hands and feet with a grass rope, until once more a small ransom is handed over. Throughout the *navũ* this play goes on. Everywhere you see boys armed with sticks or carrying grass ropes handy; and whole bands of them will swagger along the streets looking for their 'playmates' among the girls and women, shouting at them, brandishing their sticks, and trying to seize them, with unequal success. For the 'passive' partner is allowed to evade the punishment, to retaliate, and even to cheat. Quite a few of the older men when they are caught by their young assailants do not pay the required ransom, but merely press their fingers into their playmates' hands as though handing over a coin, and escape by this ruse. And the women and girls on the market sit behind their wares with a stick or grass rope ready in case a 'playmate' tried his extortions on them. There is no serious note in all this: it is fun, and nothing else, taken in good part by everyone. Throughout this play another *motif* is also visible. The *dzomanci* will often be aided by his friends, and during *navũ* you will everywhere see youths walking in pairs and holding hands, two friends facing together the adventures of the day. Thus the *navũ* becomes a multiple occasion for mobilizing and demonstrating the main social relationships governing Nupe life—age-grade solidarity, political allegiance; kinship bonds; and friendship.

It is difficult to define precisely the Islamic kernel in the Nupe celebrations of the *Muharram*, mainly because the character of

[1] Joking relationship also occurs outside the kindred, between certain Nupe sections and other tribes, or within Nupe communities between occupational groups. As these relationships play no part in the *navũ*, they are here disregarded.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND POLITICAL SYSTEM

602 Local and Kinship Grouping

611 Descent and succession to offices and the inheritance of rights to land and other property are normally patrilineal among all Nupe. At the same time kin ties traced through the mother may afford opportunities for advancement and, especially in Bida the capital, maternal connections with persons of rank may be used to advantage in the political sphere. The Nupe term *dengi* connotes kinship in the widest sense to include all recognized cognates, but the effective *dengi* of an individual consists mainly of his agnates or patrilineal relatives descended from a common ancestor several generations back. Maternal kin ties, on the other hand, are rarely traced or effective beyond one or two generations. Groups of male patrikin are significant both as the nuclei of residential groups in extended families and in the status system of the chiefdom.

596 The domestic unit is usually an elementary or polygynous family, i.e., a man,
592 his wife or wives, and unmarried children.[1] This, or a larger group consisting of a man, his wives, married sons, their wives and children, or of a set of brothers, their wives, children, and grandchildren, the nucleus of which is thus a patrilineage of small span, inhabits a division of the compound, keeps house and eats in common, and forms a single productive or labour unit. No special name exists for this group apart from that referring to its organization as a labour unit or *efakó*. The larger unit was formerly general, but under modern conditions the family has tended to divide when sons become adult. The domestic family normally forms part of a larger social unit, the " house " (*emi*), which is both a kinship and a territorial group and may also be referred to as a *katamba*, a term for the common gateway or entrance to an enclosed compound. An *emi* may be localized in one compound or may be distributed over a number of adjacent compounds, occupying either the whole or part of a ward (*efu*). In Bida the *emi* tends to be more widely scattered. The nucleus of an *emi* again consists of a body of patrikin to which wives and others are attached. Its head is known as the *emitsó* (" owner of the house "), a position which falls to the senior male member of the group, who is succeeded by the next in seniority of the same generation, and so on. When a section of an *emi* separates physically it continues to recognize its former head while he lives, but on his death it often attains an independent position with its own head. The size of the *emi* varies considerably. In Bida, those of commoners are often small and may contain no more than six or eight individuals; in the smaller settlements and among the nobility they may include as many as 60 persons.

602 Beyond these groups the Nupe also often recognize kinship over a still wider field. Thus a whole village may be regarded as descended from one ancestor, but such essentially mythical kinship links do not involve any specific kinship claims and obligations.

565 The three royal houses of Nupe may be regarded as large lineages or " clans,"
614 for they claim to observe rigid patrilineal descent believed to have proceeded from sanctified " first ancestors."

Forms of Settlement: House Types[2]

361 Nupe live in compact villages or towns (*ezi* is the term for both) which vary considerably in size; in Bida Emirate, besides the capital, there are three considerable settlements: Doko (800), Mokwa (2,000), Kutigi (3,000). Some, on the other

[1] Nadel, 1942, pp. 25–33.

[2] Nadel, 1942, pp. 24, 27–32, 34, 36– . 226–7; 1938; Temple, 1919, p. 324; Malam Aliyu Bida, notes, ed. Harris.